The SCEPTRE

QUEENS COLLEGE

CHARLOTTE, N. C.

VOLUME II May 1929 NUMBER 3

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The SCEPTRE

VOLUME II *May, 1929* NUMBER 3

Reconciliation

(TO W. H. B. WITH WHOM I HAVE FALLEN OUT, AND IN, TIMES WITHOUT NUMBER)

By RENA HARRELL

A lady once,
From Portugal I think,
Recounted all the ways she loved her lord:
The depth and breadth and height,
The level of any old day's need; then,
Freely, purely, and with childhood faith;
And swore, vehemently, if God it please,
She'd love him better after death.

Having never loved you any way at all,
I've no need to use her figure.
But I could count the times, say this time, or that,
When I've been too outdone with your smiles, or gracious talk;
And you, gathering as much,
Have suddenly faced it,
And upon the nonce, as Chaucer puts it,
Have so said and done, or not said,
That all resentment vanished,
And, phoenix-like, rose in its stead
The joy of liking you immensely.

Garden Days

By MARY PRESSLEY, 07

HAVE YOU a garden? Before you answer, remember what an elastic term that word "garden" is. It may be a formal tract, designed by a landscape engineer, with lily pools and artful walks and imported shrubbery, or it may be half-a-dozen square feet in a backyard, or, in extreme emergency, it may be a box nailed outside the window of a top-floor apartment. Its size and cost, however, aren't important; but a garden of some sort is essential to the happiness of most human beings in Springtime. Anybody who can't dig in dirt in Spring is poor indeed; and, conversely, the man or woman who has a few seeds and a place to bury them is rich.

The financial returns of that garden, in vegetables or in blossoms, aren't a subject for consideration, unless, indeed, you have commercialized your joy in "green things growing softly"; but, as our friend Kipling would say, "that's another story." For the average gardener, the garden may be a total loss in dollars and cents, and yet an asset. It is the accessories of a garden which determine its value.

For instance, there's the tonic blue of rainwashed sky overhead. There may be a certain lazy haze that reminds you of forgotten Indian Summers half-a-world away. There's the thrilling blackness of storm-clouds that roll up before you get that last row of pansies set out, with a tremendous charm that is all their own.

Birds belong to gardens, too. Sometimes the backyard garden doesn't have any visitors but sooty, ill-tempered sparrows,—yet even the sparrows are akin to the feathered chorus that chants matins among the dewsweet wildernesses of dream-gardens. Bird-songs are useful in restoring romance to lives jaded by winter storms.

There are many other valuable things in gardens—nice, crumbly loam, and fat, squashy worms, and the mysterious breath of the South Wind.

And in real gardens, too, there lurks a secret that untrained eyes can not see and untrained ears can not hear. In a real garden the wee pointed ears of Pan move slyly through leafy coverts, and his pipes blow soft, sweet magic of the days when earth was young, when the gods came down and walked with men, and nymphs and dryads danced under a smiling moon in the innocent joy of living. Pan is a lonely exile among man-built mountains of brick and stone, and pavements wear his unshod hoofs painfully; but Pan finds a bit of his kingdom wherever a garden is planted in love, and greets it with elfin glee. Even though it may be shut in with tall dingy houses, the little earth-god lingers there sometimes, and plants among the seeds in the tiniest plot vague, sweet memories of "days that are no more," to fill the gardener's heart with happy yearning.

No, it isn't the size or the cost of your garden that counts,—only the soul that goes into its making.

Have you a garden? And do you love it enough to catch the faint music of the pipes of Pan that sound only in gardens which are loved?

In Church

By Rena Harrell

Blossoms dancing by moonlight on the college campus,
Moon-pale dogwood under the April moon—
Here while the hushed congregation becalms itself
With charitable thoughts that will be left within the sanctuary,
While the minister intones the scripture,
Comes to me as a half-remembered ecstasy
The witchery and wonder of dogwood blossoms in moonlight,
Dreamily, lazily dancing on a dew-sprinkled moonshiny campus,
Ghostly dogwood, under a ghostly moon.

Shadows

By LUCIA HARDING

A MOONLIGHT NIGHT, a golden night, a night of shadows, a world of silhouette.

A garden where shadow trees stand out in dark relief, on a golden background, trees bending, twisting, moving in the breeze. Queer things, shadows.

A shadow on a garden wall of an old man bent with years, thinking, dreaming, feeling. The wind blows but the shadow is still a picture on stone, carved in onyx. Dreaming of what, who knows? Queer things, shadows.

Down by the river's edge, silhouettes in water, a man and a girl, holding hands, moving figures these, dreaming, living, understanding.

A tiny house close by the seaside, the home of a sailor at sea. Below the window are shadows, a mother with a baby in her arms, rocking, resting, dreaming,—yes, just shadows.

Back in the garden, is an old woman, a child kneeling at her side, mere shadows close by an arbor remembering, listening intent.

Suddenly all is dark, there are no shadows, but a coverlet of black. A cloud has thrown a shadow over the moon and now there is no gold.

And so life is filled with pictures to love and to remember. Some day a shadow comes and blots out this life of ours, but unlike our shadow selves we do not disappear in darkness. We live on and on in a land where all is gold.

Rondeau

By Mary Sanders Brookes

The roses of May
Are the quickest to fade,
They drop their sweet petals
In every green glade,
First loves are wild roses,
Pale in the shade,
The roses of May
Are the quickest to fade.

A Study of a Death in The Desert

By Georgie Spratt

John, the last of Jesus' disciples, was himself a magnificent personality. His purpose in writing his gospel was not to relate the facts in the life of Jesus in their historical order, but to go further and reveal to us the personality of Christ, regardless of the natural sequence of these facts. Is it any wonder then that Browning should choose the death of this "disciple whom Jesus loved" as a subject of one of his most powerful dramatic monologues?

At the beginning of the poem, John, who is nearing the end, is in a sort of coma. Pamplylax, Xanthus, and Valens are attempting to revive him so that he can speak once more. They cool his forehead with water and give him a little wine. Valens broke a ball of Nard and made perfume in an effort to revive him, but when the Boy who was standing nearby, opened his mouth and exclaimed, "I am the Resurrection and the Life!" John opened his eyes, sat up, and spoke of his own accord. He speaks to them of the doctrines he had taught, of the people who did and did not believe. Through his teachings he revealed the deep spiritual nature of his Master, whose influence has been communicated from personality to personality on down through the ages.

One of the doctrines that John was wont to teach was how different persons witness in each man three souls which make up one soul. The first of these is that which *does,* representing the body and the senses of man, the second is that which *knows,* representing the mentality of man, and the third is that which *is*. This latter represents a spiritual insight, and is the true soul of man. This doctrine is typical of the Browning philosophy. Browning believes that when we have reached the highest spiritual love then and then only do we comprehend what *is* both in man and in God.

John is beginning to contemplate how when "his ashes scatter" to the four winds there will be no one alive who saw Christ with his eyes and touched Him. When Christ bade him teach what Christ had taught himself, he went for many years about the world doing what his Lord had commanded, but when he came to Patmos he was not bidden to teach, but to write—and men believed. Then when he received no more message, he taught that "men should, for love's sake in love's strength believe." However, even in John's time anti-Christs were already in the world. But John reaches the keynote of the Christian religion when he says:

> "Though the whole earth should lie in wickedness
> We had the truth, might leave the rest to God."

Truth is the highest gift of God. When we have truth we understand more fully what *is,* and we can certainly safely leave the rest to God.

John, looking into the future, imagines that people will say of him even as they have of Christ, "Was John at all, and did he say he saw?" And so all down through the ages we have had our "Doubting Thomases" who would or could not believe until they had seen for themselves. It remains for those who have reached that higher plane of truth to carry it on—those of whom Christ said, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

We cannot aspire any higher than to gain truth. The following lines from John are excellent philosophy—

"For life, with all it yields of joy and woe, and hope and fear,—believe the aged friend,—

Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And, having gained truth, keep truth;
That is all.

* * * * *

—this gift of truth

Once grasped, were this our soul's gain safe, and sure—
Weighs first, then chooses."

In attaining what *is* or truth, we all have to be put to tests. Even John was tested, for when he saw the Jews coming to take Jesus he forsook Him and fled; but afterwards his soul gained truth—when one has gained truth, he has gained a permanent possession. "All things," says John, "suffer change save truth and God." As different social and economical changes take place on earth, man simply sees God in a new light at every age. God Himself never changes. He is the same, "yesterday, today, and forever."

Christ by the use of miracles manifested his power as the Son of God. John also at the beginning of his ministry performed miracles, but as *faith* grew in man the miracles were unnecessary. Through the powers of our reasoning we come to the acknowledgment of God in Christ. When we have made this acknowledgment, we have begun really to live.

On the other hand John says:

"For I say, this is death, and the sole death,
When a man's loss comes to him from his gain,
Darkness from light, from knowledge ignorance,
And lack of love from love made manifest."

When man can see just so far and no farther, when for some reason he does not or does not wish to gain the truth then what knowledge he has amounts practically to ignorance. Certainly in respect to all it contributes to the well-being of his soul.

Man has always been searching for a higher power and for the satisfaction that a knowledge of God could give him. Unfortunately there are some who "reject Christ through very need of Him." And what after all will worldly knowledge avail without truth?

> "What," says Browning, "man considers he knows today
> Come tomorrow he will not know."

Knowledge is constantly being gained. The old is being discredited by the new, until nothing certain is left save truth. And so again we find ourselves back at the beginning. The highest spiritual insight comes through the knowledge of what *is* or truth. This was Browning's philosophy. He believed in it and sought after it, and we believe that if ever any of our poets found it, in fact if ever man found it, Browning found it.

The Dream

By Laura Moore Gavin

I slept and dreamt a thousand things
But one thing I remember,
Its beauty came in soft, clear, fragile splendor
That flashed and sparkled and then was gone.
It was a dream, a veil
Sewed with a fairy's needle
(No mortal could have made a thing so fair)
It was a bubble painted by the brush of God
For 'twas divine.
I gazed and then a fancy took me
And I sought to know from whence its fabric came
I reached forth my hand to feel how 'twas composed
And then the bubble burst.

Twilight

By Mary Groome McNinch

Fat trees make long streaks across the waving grass; then trees outstretch the fat ones. A breeze stops to rumple the earth's wavy locks, sparkling in the sun, then wafts the orchard's sweet message of spring to my nostrils. Birds chatter—chatter among themselves as they hop from limb to limb making the very bows on which they perch quiver and resound. In a far corner white flags wave against the blue horizon. . . . Cows amble over the hill and down to the stream, stopping to munch the grass along the way and quickening the step at the sound of a tinkling bell. A Ford rumbles by. A distant dog barks as the men put the horses in their stalls.

Off, beyond it all, scarce discernible sky-scrapers fade and yet grow fainter—are gone.

And now the fast sinking sun has made the white flags grey-coated sentinels to guard in his absence. Lower sinks the sun as it changes to a fiery ball, turning the whole heaven into flame, blotting out the blue. A bell comes; silence. Then a cooler breeze. Crickets. And inside the blare of radio. It is night.

For You

By Mary Sanders Brookes

For you I'd brave the mountain's craggie heights,
For you I'd try the ragings of the sea,
For there is naught in Heaven or on Earth
Could hold me—if I knew you wanted me.

Did I say naught? There is one slender cord.
Which—tho' you called—would keep me
from your side—
Methinks you would not want me, if I came
Dragging the broken fetters of my pride.

Reflections

By Kathleen Hollingsworth

There was winding street on winding street of houses with bright lamps showing through the windows. This was a very favorable omen for starting a new four-year phase of life. The next impression, however, was a shade less cheerful; a big and ominous dark red brick building with a rather military aspect and many, many square windows in regular rows. Presbyterian stock from the rugged country of Scotland had not been enchanted by romantic turrets, domes and curving passageways. Later, familiarity and dear associations gave the stern buildings a softened aspect, and in the spring when the dogwood and flags and shy little flowerets in the grass blossomed, and the great old oaks overshadowed everything with their soft green and sometimes greyish shadows, the entire place was most lovely.

Studying was always accompanied by muted-by-distance sonatinas, scales, preludes, or some musical form or other from the music building. The library was always in reach of the music and the notes gradually became a necessary part of the studying process. In the winter the sunshine streamed in the library's high windows making it a cheerful place, and studying a less painful process—as time went on a very pleasant process on occasions. In the spring the high ceilings and long, low, bare tables gave it a cool atmosphere and the sunshine filtered through the faithful green shades with a dulled intensity. There were books and books and books, books of poetry, interpretation, philosophy, men and women's lives, psychology, histories of nations, myths and tradition, a seemingly unending source of facts, legend and emotion. Closely related to this were long periods of hard study bending over a window seat or a table, that fatiguing necessity of becoming acquainted with concentration for the first time. Often during these periods there

were repeated cries of, "I'll be *so* glad when I'm through school!" or "I won't be sorry when *I*'m through!" To the most vehement criers of these words commencement time when it rolls around is just as bitter-sweet as to the others. There is a new significance in commencement when it is your commencement that refuses to be overlooked. Sad thoughts come creeping into the jauntiest heart. Everything takes on a new and softened cast. One gazes at a little square room and wonders what it will mean to other girls—little room that stays through the years and shelters youth; youth with its aspirations and ideals, its willingness and eagerness, and ignorance and ecstasy!

Pines

Those pine trees are a poem
That God has made for you,
They are always there to look at
When you are feeling blue.
There's strength in their tall straightness
Their whisperings are cool
How I love those great tall pines
That God has made for you!

—G. S., '29.

Memories of You

By Mary Robinson Smith

When twilight deepens and darkness falls;
Twinkling stars and night-birds' calls,
A silver moon in the clear bright sky,
A tremulous breeze dancing swiftly by,
These bring memories of you.

When fades the night and wakes the morning new;
A rose asparkle with clear shining dew,
The quiet and the sweet fresh air,
The birds' wakening notes everywhere,
These bring memories of you.

When the day has reached its height;
The sun's bright and powerful light,
The work that's done and still to be done,
A child's sweet laughter, shouts, and fun,
These bring memories of you.

In the fall and winter it's still the same way;
The harvest fields and new mown hay,
The frost and soft falling snow,
The Christmas-tide and fires' warm glow,
These bring memories of you.

Morning, noon, and night, to hear your call
I long; in summer, winter, spring, or fall;
And though that call may never be
All these things I hear and see
Shall still bring memories of you.

"Henry the Eighth"

Reviewed by CORNELIA MCLAUCHLIN

IN HIS BOOK, Henry VIII, Francis Hackett gives us a personal history of a dynast and his wives.

Beheading those who crossed his will, finding conscientious scruples whenever he wanted to cast off a wife, drunk with power, Henry defied the Pope, built an empire and a religion. He slaughtered his way to his own ends.

For thirty-eight years he dominated England. Religion and politics were as clay in his hand. He married six women, some for love and some for politics.

Six wives and four headstones commemorate the horror of being Henry's Queen.

After twenty years Henry's tender conscience forced him to set aside, Catherine of Aragon, his first Queen for the hard splendor of Ann Boleyn, the clever, vivacious, maid of honor who paid for her lovers with her head and was succeeded by Jane Seymour—who is known as the gentle Queen, and that's about all.

After her death Cromwell then chose for Henry, Anne of Cleves, for political reasons—and indeed one look at Anne assured everybody there could be no other. Henry however, had looked, not at Anne, but at Holbein's all too flattering portrait. But on the wedding day he had to marry the woman, not theportrait. This time Cromwell paid with his head, and Anne was sent home.

Then the Norfolk interests found Kathryn Howard, lovely and headstrong, too empty-headed to be warned by the fate of her four

predecessors. Kathryn and her lover went to the block leaving Henry free to bestow his favors upon Katherine Pharr, who was with him to the end although she nearly made the same doomed trip to the Tower. She, however, had mastered the gentle art of putting her husband always in the right. As a reward for her virtues she survived him.

This man went from sport to love, from love to war, from war to religion, spilling the blood of Europe, his prime ministers, his wives and his favorites.

History has recorded the greatness, but this magnificient drama, as a whole, has long awaited the master biographer. Francis Hackett worked on this book six years, research on it having carried him to all the famous libraries of Europe.

It is true that many historians have put more emphasis upon the greatness of Henry's work, and not so much upon his desire for wives, but memory is a faithless servant and we shall probably forget their restrained words and remember the fine stories, the scenes and the people in Hackett's.

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